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TRAINING PLAN

Climb 10 seconds faster in six weeks

Race a hill-climb or just leave your mates behind with coaching editor Phil Mosley's training plan

We all know that feeling. One minute you're happily riding along with your friends and the next minute they're disappearing into the distance as you struggle to fight your way up a big hill. If that sounds familiar, this six-week training plan will help you to avoid being the rider everyone has to wait for. It focuses mainly on cycling, but includes enough swimming and running to maintain your fitness.

In simple terms, riding faster uphill

is mostly about two things: your power and your weight. Your power refers to how hard and fast you pedal, while your weight is a combination of you, your bike and all your kit. To improve your cycling power you'll need to train at certain intensities on the bike and include some weight training if possible. We'll cover this in the plan.

The harder task is reducing your riding weight. It's been estimated that just one kilogram of excess weight on a moderate gradient at a fixed cycling effort costs you about three seconds

? IS THIS PLAN FOR YOU?

- Goal**
Knock 10 seconds off a three-minute bike climb
- Timescale**
6 weeks
- Start point**
Bike 1hr
- Level**
Beginner to intermediate

per kilometre. The best place to start shaving weight is on your bike. You don't need to spend a fortune on new parts, just cut down on any unnecessary items. Things like heavy saddlebags, chunky mudguards and extra water bottles add up, while rotating parts like wheels and pedals make an even bigger difference.

If you feel you need to lose body fat, long rides are your secret weapon. You can expect to burn around 1,200 calories in a two-hour steady weekend cycle, which is partly why they're included in this training plan. Train consistently for six weeks, do your long rides and cut down on the bad stuff (booze and sugary things) and you'll lose weight.

Before you start, there are a few things to note. For simplicity's sake the swims are given as 'main set' only but you should incorporate a warm-up and warm-down too. So at the beginning of your swims, include a few hundred metres of front crawl, drills, backstroke and kicking. And for your warm-downs, do at least five minutes of gentle swimming. You should also check out the Key and Training Zones sections on this page, so that you know what all of the abbreviations mean.

6 WEEK PLAN TRAINING ZONES GUIDE

DESCRIPTION	HEART RATE (%MAX)	RPE 1-10	ACCUMULATED	INTENSITY
21 Recovery	55-70	<2	1-6hrs	Easy
22 Endurance	70-75	2-3	1-3hrs	Steady
23 Tempo	75-80	3-4	50-90mins	Comfortable
24 Threshold	80-88	4-6	10-60mins	Uncomfortable
25 Vo ₂ max	89-100	>7	12-30mins	Hard to very hard

KEY
ALT Alternating between, BUILD Do each rep slightly faster, DRILL Your choice of swim drill, FC Front crawl, KICK Kick with a float held out in front, MAIN Main set, PULL Front crawl with a pullbuoy between your thighs, STRIDES Run for 20secs, building speed, WU Warm up, WD Warm down



	DAY		ESSENTIAL WORKOUT		OPTIONAL WORKOUT
WEEK 1	Mon	Weights	MAIN 2x20 reps of the following exercises (at 60% of your max load where appropriate) + 30sec rests: squats, hamstring curls, calf raises, abdominal crunches on a gym ball, lumbar hyper-extensions ('Supermans')	Bike	MAIN 30mins to 1hr Z1
	Tue	Swim	MAIN 8x100m Z4 ALT 100m FC/100m PULL + 45sec rests	Run	MAIN 30-40mins Z1-Z2
	Wed	Bike (indoors)	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN (8mins, 7mins, 6mins) Z4 + 3min Z1 recoveries WD 5mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Thur	Run	WU 10mins Z2, 4x STRIDES MAIN 7x200m Z4-Z5 + 20sec rests, 4min rest then repeat x1 WD 5mins Z1	Swim	MAIN All in Z2: 400m ALT 50m DRILL/50m FC, 300m PULL, 400m ALT 25m DRILL/75m FC, 300m PULL
	Fri		RECOVERY		RECOVERY
	Sat	Bike	WU 20mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN Ride as hard as possible up a local hill. Time yourself and write it down WD 10mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Sun	Bike	MAIN 1-2hrs (depending on experience), mostly in Z2 but tackle the hills in Z3 in a big gear and at a low cadence of around 60rpm		RECOVERY
WEEK 2	Mon	Weights	MAIN 2x20 reps of the following exercises (at 60% of your max load where appropriate) + 30sec rests: squats, hamstring curls, calf raises, abdominal crunches on a gym ball, lumbar hyper-extensions ('Supermans')	Bike	MAIN 30mins to 1hr Z1
	Tue	Swim	MAIN 2x200m FC Z3 + 30sec rests, 2x100m PULL Z3 + 20sec rests, 2x100m FC Z4 + 30sec rests	Run	MAIN 30-40mins Z1-Z2
	Wed	Bike (indoors)	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 2x12mins Z4 + 3min recovery in Z2 WD 5mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Thur	Run	WU 10mins Z2, 4x STRIDES MAIN 4x400m Z4-Z5 + 40sec rests, 3min rest then repeat x1 WD 5mins Z1	Swim	MAIN (100m DRILL, 400m FC Z2, 100m DRILL, 300m PULL Z3, 100m DRILL, 200m FC Z4) + 30sec rests
	Fri		RECOVERY		RECOVERY
	Sat	Bike	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 8x2mins Z5 up a hill (4-7% gradient). Freewheel back down for the recoveries WD 10mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Sun	Bike	MAIN Ride 1-2hrs (depending on experience), mostly in Z2 but tackle the hills in Z3 in a big gear and at a low cadence of around 60rpm		RECOVERY
WEEK 3	Mon	Weights	MAIN 3x10 reps of the following exercises (at 70-80% of your max load where appropriate) + 60sec rests: squats, hamstring curls, calf raises, abdominal crunches on a gym ball, lumbar hyper-extensions ('Supermans')	Bike	MAIN 30mins to 1hr Z1
	Tue	Swim	MAIN 4x200m Z4 ALT 200m FC/200m PULL + 60sec rests	Run	MAIN 30-40mins Z1-Z2
	Wed	Bike (indoors)	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 3x9mins Z4 + 3min recoveries in Z1 WD 5mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Thur	Run	WU 10mins Z2, 4x STRIDES MAIN 6x800m Z4 + 2min jog rests WD 5mins Z1	Swim	MAIN All in Z2: 400m ALT 50m DRILL/50m FC, 200m FC, 400m ALT 25m DRILL/75m FC, 200m PULL
	Fri		RECOVERY		RECOVERY
	Sat	Bike	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 5x3mins Z5 up a hill (4-7% gradient). Freewheel back down for the recoveries WD 10mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Sun	Bike	MAIN 1hr 15mins to 2hrs 15mins (depending on experience), mostly in Z2 but tackle the hills in Z3 in a big gear and at a low cadence of around 60rpm		RECOVERY



	DAY		ESSENTIAL WORKOUT		OPTIONAL WORKOUT
WEEK 4	Mon	Weights	MAIN 3x10 reps of the following exercises (at 70-80% of your max load where appropriate) + 60sec rests: squats, hamstring curls, calf raises, abdominal crunches on a gym ball, lumbar hyper-extensions ('Supermans')	Bike	MAIN 30mins to 1hr Z1
	Tue	Swim	MAIN 400m PULL Z2 + 60sec rest, 300m FC Z3 + 45sec rest, 200m PULL Z4 + 30sec rest, 100m FC Z5	Run	MAIN 30-40mins Z1-Z2
	Wed	Bike (indoors)	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 15mins Z4, 10mins Z4 + 3mins Z1 recovery WD 5mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Thur	Run	WU 10mins Z2, 4x STRIDES MAIN 4x1,200m Z4 + 2min 30secs jog rests WD 5mins Z1	Swim	MAIN All in Z2: 8x100m ALT 100m FC/100m DRILL/100m PULL/100m DRILL + 20sec rests
	Fri		RECOVERY		RECOVERY
	Sat	Bike	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 10x2mins Z5 up a hill (4-7% gradient). Freewheel back down for the recoveries WD 10mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Sun	Bike	MAIN 1hr 15mins to 2hrs 15mins (depending on experience), mostly in Z2 but tackle the hills in Z3 in a big gear and at a low cadence of around 60rpm		RECOVERY
WEEK 5	Mon	Weights	MAIN 3x10 reps of the following exercises (at 70-80% of your max load where appropriate) + 60sec rests: squats, hamstring curls, calf raises, abdominal crunches on a gym ball, lumbar hyper-extensions ('Supermans')	Bike	MAIN 30mins to 1hr Z1
	Tue	Swim	MAIN 400m Z2 ALT 50m FC/25m KICK, 8x50m FC BUILD + 15sec rests, 2x100m FC Z5 + 60sec rests	Run	MAIN 30-40mins Z1-Z2
	Wed	Bike (indoors)	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN (10mins, 9mins, 8mins) Z4 + 3min recoveries in Z1 WD 5mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Thur	Run	WU 10mins Z2, 4x STRIDES MAIN 3x1,600m Z4 + 3min jog rests WD 5mins Z1	Swim	MAIN All Z2 + 20sec rests: 200m DRILL, 200m PULL, 200m DRILL, 200m FC
	Fri		RECOVERY		RECOVERY
	Sat	Bike	WU 10mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 6x3mins Z5 up a hill (4-7% gradient). Freewheel back down for the recoveries WD 10mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Sun	Bike	MAIN 1hr 30mins to 2hrs 30mins (depending on experience), mostly in Z2 but tackle the hills in Z3 in a big gear and at a low cadence of around 60rpm		RECOVERY
WEEK 6	Mon	Weights	MAIN 3x10 reps of the following exercises (at 70-80% of your max load where appropriate) + 60sec rests: squats, hamstring curls, calf raises, abdominal crunches on a gym ball, lumbar hyper-extensions ('Supermans')	Bike	MAIN 30mins to 1hr Z1
	Tue	Swim	MAIN 8x100m ALT 100m FC/100m PULL Z4 + 45sec rests	Run	MAIN 30-40mins Z1-Z2
	Wed	Bike (Indoors)	WU 15mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5/30secs Z1 MAIN 2x8mins + 3min recovery in Z1 WD 5mins Z1		RECOVERY
	Thur	Run	WU 10mins Z2, 4x STRIDES MAIN 4x800m Z4 + 2min jog rests WD 5mins Z1	Swim, bike or run	MAIN (100m FC Z2, 200m PULL Z3, 300m FC Z4, 200m PULL Z3, 100m FC Z2) + 30sec rests
	Fri		RECOVERY		RECOVERY
	Sat	Bike	MAIN 1hr 30mins, mostly Z2		RECOVERY
	Sun	Bike	WU 20mins Z2, 4x60secs ALT 30secs Z5, 30secs Z1 MAIN Ride as hard as possible up the same hill as in Week 1. Time yourself and compare WD 10mins Z1		RECOVERY